

**CHESAPEAKE CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 28, 2008**

**6:30 pm**

**PRESENT:**   Harriett Davis            Linda Francis            Ron Francis  
                 Tom Wheeler            Mary Ellen Ellis            Natalie Gentry

**ABSENT:**   Tracey Sampson, Jeffra Moore and Andy Vaughan

**Minutes of September 23, 2008 meeting: approve YES**

**Motion by: Linda Francis    2nd by: Mary Ellen Ellis**

**Applications for Action:**

Various historic homes – review and approve wording for plaques for the  
Following homes:            Dr. Smither's House and McReynolds-Woods House,  
   Capt Colmary –Salmon House, The Whiteoak House

- B206    Capt Colmary-Salmon House -- with change in last sentence**  
**Motion: Linda Francis    2nd: Natalie Gentry            Approved: YES**
- B204    Dr. Smither's House – no changes**  
**Motion: Natalie Gentry 2nd: Linda Francis            Approved: YES**
- B 224    The Whiteoak House-revised version**  
**Motion: Linda Francis    2nd Mary Ellen Ellis            Approved: YES**
- G400    McReynolds-Woods House-revised version**  
**Motion: Mary Ellen Ellis            2nd: Natalie Gentry            Approved: YES**
- B98    Franklin Hall – "suggested" revision**  
**Motion: Linda Francis    2nd: Natalie Gentry            Approved: YES**
- B108    Town Hall**  
**Motion: Linda Francis    2nd: Natalie Gentry            Approved: YES**

**ALL APPROVED VERBAGE FOR THESE SIGNS IS ATTACHED TO THESE MINUTES.**

**Discussion**

**Meeting adjourned            Motion by: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd by: \_\_\_\_\_**

B98 Franklin Hall

In Revolutionary times this site was occupied by the very popular Chick s Tavern, one of 2 buildings in Bohemia Village. In the 1800's the property was obtained by Thomas Conrey who constructed this Romanesque style building c.1870 using locally made bricks. Over the years the buildings' uses included a hardware store and harness business with a stable in the lower back level. Later it was a dry-goods and the second floor was used for meetings, dances and band practices. The Chesapeake City District Civic Association obtained the building in 1974 and began restorations. The library and the Cecil County Arts Council had been housed here as well as commercial businesses.

Plaques donated by the CCDCA 2008

B108 Town Hall 1914

Ralph Rees built this commercial building to house his hardware store around 1914. Like many early twentieth century commercial front buildings, only the pressed tin facade raises two stories. This building housed Rees Hardware Store and an agency for Oakland cars (which was the first dealership in Cecil County) and also the American Store. Restorations began in the 1980's when it was obtained by a cabinet maker. In 2002 the Town of Chesapeake City purchased the building, completed restoration and converted it into Town Hall.

Plaque donated by the Town of Chesapeake City 2008

B206 Capt Colmary -Salmon House 1848

This home is architecturally important as it is one of two mid 19th century dwellings with Greek Revival overtones. These buildings being two rooms deep were pace setters for other buildings in town. Captain Abraham Colmary built this house in 1848 prior to the Civil War while being a steamboat captain on the canal. It was considered appropriate for a steamboat captain's family. They operated the small steamboats that carried passengers and freight on a regular schedule. One route was Port Deposit and back to Chesapeake City. In 1882 the house was conveyed to Frank Conrey, brother of Dr. Conrey, and operator of the local coal yard for a sum of \$2,250.00.

Donated by Martin and Denise Salmon 2008

B204 DR. SMITHERS' HOUSE c. 1848

Built by Firman Layman, this house is a prime example of original details from the late 1840's when the Greek Revival architecture was in vogue. Waitman Smithers, the toll collector and later superintendent of the C&D Canal, purchased the house in 1912. His son, Dr. Delmar Smithers, for whom the house is named, lived here with his family after his father's death and served the community as dentist. In 1966 Delmar passed away at the age of 92. He left the house to his two daughters, Elizabeth & Margaret who lived here until 1995. The Smithers sisters were instrumental in starting the Civic Association and Historic Commission. In 1997 Lee Collins restored the home.

Plaque donated by Capt & Mrs. Schweizer 2008

B224

The Whiteoak House

1840

Architecturally the Whiteoak House is representative of vernacular buildings constructed in Chesapeake City in the 1840's and 50's. Old timers in Chesapeake City claim this house rests on the 1<sup>st</sup> lot sold in town. In 1854, Richard Bayard leased the property to Absalom Cropper, a boat captain for \$400.00. In 1867 Absalom Cropper transferred the land to James Porter, a farmer. The Smithers family came into ownership through the wills of James Porter and his heir, Margaret Porter. Dr. Delmar Smithers sold the property in 1921 to Wilmer Bristow, an engineer on a canal tugboat. Clifford Whiteoak, a dispatcher on the canal for 38 years, took possession in 1931.

Donated by Fred and Mary Graff 2008

G400 McReynolds-Woods house 1870

This home was occupied by several notable people over the years. The Bridge tender for the long bridge, Mr. Hevelow, used the railing from the bridge to fence in the yard. Capt. Ed Sheridan operated the ferry which transversed the canal, until the bridge was completed in 1945. The McReynolds family occupied the home from 1965 until 2005. During restoration, a copy of the "Elkton Appeal" newspaper dated Aug. 1, 1888 was found tucked in a rafter. Round of soup can tops were found neatly tacked over the knot holes in the flooring. In 2008, 100 year old reclaimed random width flooring from Curtis Paper Mill in Newark, Delaware was installed on the first floor. The barn built in 2008 is similar in shape to one that occupied the same area in the 1920's.

Donated by Bobby Walls and Carol Attix 2008